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SCENE IN A PRIVATE MAD-HOUSE.

FROM THE MONTREAL HERALD.

"The following lines, descriptive of a scene in a private mad-house, are from the pen of M. G. Lewis, Esq. They were published in the National Intelligencer, about eight years since, the editors of which paper introduced them with these remarks:—'If any one can read the following lines without shuddering in sympathy with the supposed captive, he must have a heart dead to every human feeling. The perusal of them had the more effect upon us, from the conviction we have for some time entertained, that insanity, when superinduced (not natural)—when it is an affection of the mind, and not a defect of organization—is often the consequence of the treatment of the disease;—not merely of the estrangement of friends—of seclusion from the world—of coercion—but of the horrible dread of being thought mad by others. We recollect hearing of the case of an enlightened physician, who was carried by his friends to an asylum for the insane, after exhibiting symptoms of an alienation of mind. "My God! am I come to this?—Never shall I leave these walls!" And he died within them not many days after.'

"Stay, jailer, stay, and hear my woe!
She is not mad who kneels to thee;
For what I'm now too well I know,
And what I was, and what should be.
I'll rave no more in proud despair—
My language shall be mild, though sad;
But yet I firmly, truly swear,
I am not mad—I am not mad!

"My tyrant husband forged the tale
Which chains me in this dismal cell;
My fate unknown my friends bewail—
Oh! jailer, haste, that fate to tell.
Oh! haste, my father's heart to cheer:
His heart at once 'twill grieve and glad
To know, though kept a captive here,
I am not mad—I am not mad!

"He smiles in scorn, and turns the key—
He quits the grate—I knelt in vain:
His glimmering lamp, still, still I see—
'Tis gone! and all is gloom again.
Cold, bitter cold!—No warmth! no light!—
Life, all thy comforts once I had;
Yet here I'm chained, this freezing night,
Although not mad—no, no, not mad!

"'Tis sure some dream, some vision vain:
What! I—the child of rank and wealth—
Am I the wretch who clanks this chain,
Bereft of freedom, friends, and health?
Ah! while I dwell on blessings fled,
Which never more my heart must glad,
How aches my heart, how burns my head—
But 'tis not mad!—no, 'tis not mad!

"Hast thou, my child, forgot, ere this,
A mother's face, a mother's tongue?
She'll ne'er forget your parting kiss,
Nor round her neck how fast you clung;
Nor how with me you used to stay:
Nor how that suit your sire forbade;
Nor how—I'll drive such thoughts away—
They'll make me mad—they'll make me mad!

"His rosy lips, how sweet they smiled!
His mild blue eyes, how bright they shone!
None ever bore a lovelier child!
And art thou now for ever gone?
And must I never see thee more,
My pretty, pretty, pretty lad?
I will be free! unbar the door!
I am not mad—I am not mad!

"Oh, hark! what mean those dreadful cries?
His chain some furious madman breaks.
He comes—I see his glaring eyes—
Now, now, my dungeon grate he shakes.

Help! help!—He's gone!—Oh, fearful woe,
Such screams to hear, such sights to see!
My brain, my brain!—I know, I know,
I am not mad—but soon shall be.

"Yes, soon—for, lo you! while I speak,
Mark how yon demon's eye balls glare!
He sees me—now, with dreadful shriek,
He whirls a serpent high in air.
Horror!—the reptile strikes his tooth
Deep in my heart, so crushed and sad,
Ay, laugh, ye fiends!—I feel the truth—
Your task is done—I'm mad! I'm mad!

NIAGARA FALLS.

(Written during a Thunder Storm.)

FROM THE SAME.

"Among the many productions to which the impressive sublimity of the Falls of Niagara have given birth, the following is deserving of a high place. It was copied from the Public Album at the Falls, during the late visit of the editor to that place.

"Niagara—Niagara—careering in its might,
The fierce and free Niagara shall be my theme to-night;
A glorious theme—a glorious home, Niagara are mine;
Heaven's fire is on thy flashing wave, its thunder blends
with thine.

The clouds are bursting fearfully, the rocks beneath me
quiver.

But thou, unscathed, art hurrying on for ever and for ever:
Years touch thee not, Niagara, thou art a changeless thing—
For still the same deep roundelay thy solemn waters sing;
The great, the proud, of other lands, the wisest and the
best,

Must speak and think of little things—they have not seen
the West—

They have not seen the glorious West, nor in the forest
dwelt,

Where nature's ever present God is most intensely felt—
There is a chainless spirit here whose throne no eye can
reach,

Awakening thoughts in human hearts too deep for human
speech.

This is the shrine at which the heart is tutored to forget
Its former joy, its future hope, its sorrow and regret,—
For who that ever lingered here a single hour or twain,
Can think as he hath thought, or be what he hath been
again.

Where'er th wanderer's foot may roam, whate'er his lot
may be,
'Tis deeply written on his heart that he hath been with
thee."

VISIT TO A WORK-HOUSE IN ENGLAND.

Whether or not the tax which, in England, obliges every man to provide a home for the destitute, be an evil or a good, certain it is that very many, but for such institutions as the parish workhouse, would not have where to lay their heads; and that numbers are kept in comparative ease and comfort, who, were it otherwise, would be wanderers on the wide world, existing on the pitiful morsel which the hand of charity might now and then fling to them. Preservation from want is an Englishman's birth-right. In all his troubles, or sorrows, he is never without the certainty that his death-bed will not be a dunghill, or the knowledge that his dying lips will be moistened in the hour of struggles. Those thoughts suggested themselves to my mind, when, a short time ago, I visited the workhouse of a parish, a little distant from the crowded portion of London; among the aged, the sick, and the desolate, to seek materials for contemplation.

It is not my intention to dwell on the internal management of the house; in which, as in most others, selfishness had taken up his abode with charity. All my wish, and all my object, in passing through the wards, was to notice its hapless, or its happy, inmates. The first who attracted my attention, and who came under the latter class, was a young woman who had been bed-ridden from childhood. She was the victim of many diseases; yet

their power had not been able to chase from her cheek the placid smile which dwelt there, and spoke of the tranquillity that dwelt within, while the body suffered. Her countenance was serene and beautiful, though very pale; but there was a slight moisture on the upper lip that betokened the pain under which she laboured. Her employment for years (for years she had been an inmate of the workhouse) had been to teach children; and she was, at the moment I entered, surrounded by her youthful pupils. I perceived a reverend gentleman, who, as I afterwards understood, was the clergyman of the parish, going through the wards, to drop, as he passed, that cordial, which gives hope and consolation to the poor and destitute. I knew by the blessings which followed him as he went by, that he was not one of those who

"As surely as our church is vacant, flock
Into her consistory, and at leisure
There stall them, and grow fat."

Nor was he one of those clerical coxcombs who can never touch the sick, but with a glove on hand, who hasten from the death-bed to the card-table; and who never dream that their days in this world should be spent in preparing themselves and others for a better. But he was one of those who love to go on their master's errand; whose most delightful task is to soften the pathway on earth, by pointing out the road to heaven; and who are happier in the salvation of one soul, than a monarch in the acquisition of a new kingdom.

He sat down by the invalid's bed, assisted her in the instruction of her young pupils; and gave her hints, now and then, how she should instil into their minds the principles of religion and virtue, in order that they might "remember their Creator in the days of their youth, so that, when they become old, they may not depart from them."

In another ward lay a poor Irishman, who was by special favour an inmate of the workhouse; for his is not like the Englishman's—a right. The reverend visitor drew near, and accosted him with, "And how is it with you, Tim?" "Ah! God be wid you, an' all belongin' to you, it's bad enough sure, thank God," replied Tim. "And why so?" asked the clergyman. "Because, yer honour, I'm alone in the cowl world, and there'll be nobody to weep for me when I'm under the sod—no wake for poor Tim, now Judy's gone, and the childhre, and all." "And where are Judy and the children, Tim?" "Dead, dead, yer honour, and the cabin wid 'em. 'Twas the great flood that swept all away. I was off to the mountain; and, when I came down, they were cowl'd corpses afore me; many was the cry over the country for the poor things, and I—I never saw luck nor grace since. And 'tis little the neighbours thought my father's son would be in a poor-house, among strangers, God bless 'em, any way, they wouldn't let a poor Irishman starve among 'em."

In another room lay a woman in the last stage of a consumption; and, apparently, in the agonies of death. The clergyman paused, took her hand, bent down, and whispered, "Is all peace?" And she replied, "All is peace." She meant that all was tranquil *within*, for the convulsive motion of her fingers showed that it was not so with the suffering body.

In the next ward was a man bowed down by the weight of years. When the clergyman approached him, he scarcely raised his head to receive the salutation, and his reply was a thankless murmur. There was a sort of restless agony in his manner, which appeared the result of despair rather than disease, and bespoke him one of those who had seen better days, but who had not borne adversity as the blow which chastens, but does not fell—who had never learned that the wind is tempered even to the shorn lamb; and who, instead of being resigned in the hour of sorrow and suffering, was ungrateful both to God and man. The hollow eye, that looked forth from under a scowling brow, seemed to watch with a suspicious eagerness every one who passed him; and the bitter sneer on his lip betrayed the feeling with which he regarded even those who gave him food. I left him as one who was equally unfit to live or die, and grieved for a being whose

mouth was filled with curses even on the brink of the grave.

In the next bed lay a father, beside whom his two children stood. The one was looking earnestly in his face, and the other appeared to be counting the veins which ran through his wasted hand. It was a strong contrast to the scene I had just witnessed—to the man who lay near him. The one was like a tree blasted by the lightning—the other, although falling to decay, looked with hope to the flourishing progeny which grew up around him. He smiled when the reverend visitor addressed him, and pressed the offered hand to his pale lips. "I have been talking to my poor children of their mother, Sir," said he, "and have been teaching them those lessons which must bear fruit when they are indeed orphans. I know they will heed me, and walk in the ways of righteousness, and obtain peace. There is one who will be a friend to them when I am gone, who will not leave them nor forsake them, and whom death cannot sever from their youth or age. I am sure they will begood children—will you not, Mary?" said he, addressing the little one who was gazing on his countenance. "I will, father," sobbed the poor girl; "but you will not die, as my mother did; there will be no one to love us then." Her almost infant brother was looking on the group, apparently unconscious of any care. He was at that age when sorrow is seen not in perspective—before the heart contemplates aught of suffering in the world on which it has but newly entered. And I, a stranger, felt more for his fate, than he who was going into the world without a friend, save Him, of whom it hath been said, He "never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread."

Near this group lay an old veteran sailor, who had seen almost every part of the habitable globe; and who was passing away from earth carelessly, as one who is embarking on a long voyage, and who cares little for the result. "It matters not to me, Sir," said he to the reverend visitor, "I have weathered many a gale, and I can bear this; 'tis time for me to weigh my anchor and depart. I have seen good and evil days, and my shattered hulk must sink at last. Many of my old comrades are gone before, and there are but few to come after me. Some have died in the battle, and some in the flood, but they are almost all gone. I shall go down bravely, in my own country, and not, like my old shipmates, lie buried in a foreign land."

In the next ward, among many others, who were almost at the bottom of the hill of life, was a very old woman, who sat in her bed, knitting. Her grand-daughter was beside her, smoothing her pathway to the grave, by reading from that book which teaches all, that, though they live in sorrow, they may die in peace. There was in the venerable and time-worn countenance of the old woman, so much of that happy expression which, more forcibly than words, bespeaks one over whom the grave could have no victory, and for whom death could bear no sting; that I felt assured the smile which graced her cheek while living, would dwell upon it when dead.

These were the few I selected from the many who were worthy of more lengthened observation. I found what I had anticipated, that a parish workhouse is not barren of instruction; and I departed, quoting the words of the wise man—"It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting."*

A POINT OF HONOUR.

There was something very noble in the reply of the banished Queen of Denmark, who was suffering, charged with a crime of which her answer alone would prove her innocence, when solicited by her husband to return, and be reconciled, "No!" she replied, and she sacrificed a throne to the majesty of her resentment—"No! if the accusation is just, I am unworthy of his bed; if it is false, he is unworthy of mine." Her accuser, who could send her a homeless wanderer into the world, was unable to deprive her of the consciousness of her integrity—and that feeling supported her.

* Literary Observer.